

## **This is an official DHEC Health Advisory**

Distributed via SC Health Alert Network  
14 July 2005, 13:30

### **Clinical Information regarding exposure to chemical pesticides**

#### **Background Information**

The South Carolina Law Enforcement Division (SLED) informed the SC Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC) of the theft or disappearance of the agricultural pesticides, phosmet and methyl bromide, from a farm. These chemicals can cause severe injury and illness if improperly handled. DHEC would like for physicians to be alert for patients presenting with the following symptoms and signs of exposure to these pesticides and report exposures to DHEC, as per the SC 2005 List of Reportable Conditions.

**PHOSMET:** Phosmet is an organophosphate insecticide for use on fruits, nuts, other food crops, and non-food crops. It occurs as a colorless or off-white, grayish-white, or yellow crystalline solid material with an offensive odor.

**Adults:** Signs and symptoms of mild organophosphate poisoning: unexplained runny nose, sudden headache, dizziness, drooling, tightness in the chest, muscular twitching, stomach cramps, nausea and/or reduced vision.

Signs and symptoms of moderate to severe organophosphate poisoning: strange and confused behavior, coughing, wheezing, and gurgling sounds while breathing, difficulty breathing, severely pinpointed pupils, red eyes with tears present, severe difficulty seeing, vomiting, severe muscular twitching and general weakness, loss of bladder and bowel control, bradycardia, convulsions, paralysis, unconsciousness, and respiratory arrest.

**Children:** Children may exhibit different predominant signs and symptoms than adults. Strange and confused behavior, drowsiness, stupor, weakness, dyspnea and coma are the most common signs.

For more information on health effects and treatment:

<http://toxnet.nlm.nih.gov/cgi-bin/sis/search/f?./temp/~b4L5Us:1>

Poison Control: 1-800-222-1222

#### **METHYL BROMIDE**

Methyl bromide is an odorless, colorless liquid or gas insecticide used to fumigate a variety of food and non-food crops.

Signs and symptoms of methyl bromide poisoning are neurologic. Effects vary with the intensity and duration of exposure and range from headache, dizziness, blurred or double vision, slurred speech, confusion, and giddiness to disorientation, delirium, agitation, hallucinations, seizures and coma. It can also cause hypotension, cough, tachycardia and profound weakness. At high airborne concentrations, methyl bromide will irritate the eyes, skin, and the nasopharynx. A large

exposure may cause a pneumonitis, pulmonary edema, intracranial hemorrhage, paralysis, seizures, coma, chronic neurologic dysfunction or death. Skin contact with liquid methyl bromide can cause a tingling or burning sensation, itching, redness, and swelling. Contact with large amounts may cause numbness or aching pain, blisters, papules, vesicles, or chemical burns.

For more information about health effects and treatment:

<http://toxnet.nlm.nih.gov/cgi-bin/sis/search/r?dbs+hsdb:@rn+74-83-9>

Poison Control: 1-800-222-1222

### **DHEC Contact Information for Reportable Diseases and Reporting Requirements**

Reporting of cases or possible cases of pesticide poisoning and outbreaks/clusters of cases is consistent with South Carolina Law requiring the reporting of diseases and conditions to your state or local public health department. (State Law # 44-29-10 and Regulation # 61-20) as per the DHEC 2005 List of Reportable Conditions available at:

[http://www.scdhec.gov/health/disease/docs/reportable\\_conditions.pdf](http://www.scdhec.gov/health/disease/docs/reportable_conditions.pdf)

Federal HIPAA legislation allows disclosure of protected health information, without consent of the individual, to public health authorities to collect and receive such information for the purpose of preventing or controlling disease. (HIPAA 45 CFR §164.512).

## District Public Health Offices

Mail or call reports to the District Epidemiology/Disease Reports office in each district.

### Appalachia I

(Anderson, Oconee)

220 McGee Road  
Anderson, SC 29625  
Phone: (864) 231-1966  
Fax: (864) 260-5623  
Nights / Weekends: 1-(866)-298-4442

### Appalachia II

(Greenville, Pickens)

PO Box 2507  
200 University Ridge  
Greenville, SC 29602-2507  
Phone: (864) 282-4139  
Fax: (864) 282-4373  
Nights / Weekends: (864) 460-5355 or  
1-800-993-1186

### Appalachia III

(Cherokee, Spartanburg, Union)

PO Box 4217  
151 E. Wood Street  
Spartanburg, SC 29305-4217  
Phone: (864) 596-2227 ext. 210  
Fax: (864) 596-3443  
Nights / Weekends: (864) 809-3825

### Catawba

(Chester, Lancaster, York)

PO Box 817  
1833 Pageland Highway  
Lancaster, SC 29721  
Phone: (803) 286-9948  
Fax: (803) 283-0572  
Nights / Weekends: 1-(866)-867-3886 or  
1-(888)-739-0748

### Edisto Savannah

(Aiken, Allendale, Barnwell)

1680 Richland Avenue, W. Suite 40  
Aiken, SC 29801  
Phone: (803) 642-1618  
Fax: (803) 642-1619  
Nights / Weekends: (803) 827-8668 or  
1-800-614-1519

### Edisto Savannah

(Bamberg, Calhoun, Orangeburg)

PO Box 1126  
1550 Carolina Avenue  
Orangeburg, SC 29116  
Phone: (803) 533-7199  
Fax: (803) 536-9118  
Nights / Weekends: (803) 954-8513

### Low Country

(Beaufort, Colleton, Hampton, Jasper)

1407 King Street  
Beaufort, SC 29902  
Phone: (843) 525-7603  
Fax: (843) 525-7621  
Nights / Weekends: 1-800-614-4698

### Palmetto

(Fairfield, Lexington, Newberry, Richland)

2000 Hampton Street  
Columbia, SC 29204  
Phone: (803) 576-2749  
Fax: (803) 576-2993  
Nights / Weekends: (803) 304-4252

### Pee Dee

(Chesterfield, Darlington, Dillon,  
Florence, Marlboro, Marion)

145 E. Cheves Street  
Florence, SC 29506  
Phone: (843) 661-4830  
Fax: (843) 661-4859  
Nights / Weekends: (843) 660-8145

### Trident

(Berkeley, Charleston, Dorchester)

4050 Bridge View Drive, Suite 600  
N. Charleston, SC 29405  
Phone: (843) 746-3832  
Fax: (843) 746-3851  
Nights / Weekends: (843) 219-8470

### Upper Savannah

(Abbeville, Edgefield, Greenwood,  
Laurens, McCormick, Saluda)

PO Box 3227  
1736 S. Main Street  
Greenwood, SC 29646  
Phone: 1-888-218-5475  
Fax: (864) 942-3690  
Nights / Weekends: 1-800-420-1915

### Waccamaw

(Georgetown, Horry, Williamsburg)

2830 Oak Street  
Conway, SC 29526-4560  
Phone: (843) 365-3126  
Fax: (843) 365-3153  
Nights / Weekends: (843) 381-6710

### Wateree

(Clarendon, Kershaw, Lee, Sumter)

PO Box 1628  
105 North Magnolia Street  
Sumter, SC 29150  
Phone: (803) 773-5511  
Fax: (803) 773-6366  
Nights / Weekends: 1-(877)-831-4647

### **Bureau of Disease Control**

Acute Disease Epidemiology Division  
1751 Calhoun Street  
Box 101106  
Columbia, SC  
Phone: (803) 898-0861  
Fax: (803) 898-0897  
Nights / Weekends: 1-888-847-0902

### **Categories of Health Alert messages:**

Health Alert: conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

Health Advisory: provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

Health Update: provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action